Health and Safety (COVID-19) Policy

North Bay Python's organizers share our community's changed expectations of event safety during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. We believe that nobody should need to take undue risk to their health to benefit from professional development opportunities.

This year, we have a Health and Safety Policy, which acts as a framework for us to respect the health of our fellow attendees during our event, and to ensure that we can continue meeting safely at events into the future.

Our Health and Safety Policy encourages facial coverings in spaces where distancing cannot be maintained, expects voluntary testing by attendees, and includes mitigations in the form of outdoor ventilation, as suggested by the Public Health Pledge's badging standard.

Our masking standard is relaxed compared to our 2023 event, as testing in 2023 showed our venue was ventilated to outdoor levels during the event. We will reserve space in the venue for those who would prefer to wear a mask and be around other people wearing masks. Presenters can indicate that they want staff to wear masks while backstage or during pre-talk introductions.

Any standards we publish will not be weakened before the event.

Definitions

- **Require** means that a measure is a strict condition of entry. Violations will be acted on by the organizers, and may result in removal from the conference without recourse for refund.
- **Expect** means that the organizers consider a measure to be reasonable conduct at the event, and organizers will consider reports of non-compliance as incidents of *Inappropriate Behavior* (as referred to in our Code of Conduct).
- **Encourage** means that a measure is voluntary, however, compliance will improve the health and safety standards for attendees.
- **Commit** means that the conference organizers will ensure that a measure under the control of the organizers will be in place during the conference.
- **Attendees** includes people with paid or unpaid tickets to attend the conference, all presenters, vendors engaged by or on behalf of North Bay Python, as well as volunteers and organizers during each scheduled conference day, or on setup days in spaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Masks are encouraged for all attendees

We *encourage* attendees to wear facial coverings recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in indoor spaces, any spaces where physical distancing cannot be maintained, and any other spaces designated by the conference organizers.

Such spaces specifically include, but are not limited to: bathrooms, the presentation space, and sections of the speaker preparation space ("green room") that are not specifically designated for eating or drinking.

Exceptions apply to:

- Designated spaces for people who wish to wear masks
- The backstage area, where a presenter has requested those present to wear a mask

We *require* wearing masks while in these spaces.

We *encourage* the use of masks with an N95 or similar rating, which are particularly effective at reducing exposure to viruses, as well as allergens that are likely to be in high concentration at our venue and cause COVID/flu-like symptoms.

We *commit* to having a supply of high-quality facial coverings at the event, and will supply any attendee who needs one, free of charge.

We *commit* to providing outdoor space for attendees who wish to eat, drink, or socialize without wearing a facial covering.

Note that there are spaces on our venue's premises that are not subject to our policy, including the tasting room. All such spaces are clearly distanced from North Bay Python's spaces. We *commit* to identifying these spaces on the conference website and during announcement sessions during the event.

Ventilation & physical distancing

Our main presentation space is an open-air barn, with doors at both ends, which will remain open during the conference days. After measurement during our 2023 event at the same venue, ventilation is similar to outdoor levels, and we *commit* to using CO2 monitors as a proxy for ventilation levels in the barn.

We *commit* to maintaining an attendance that is limited below the physical capacity of the presentation space. All other spaces at the venue are fully outdoors and will allow for physical distancing.

In spaces where distancing is able to be maintained, we *encourage* you to maintain 6 feet of physical distancing between people.

We *expect* you to respect fellow attendees' boundaries if they request that distancing be maintained.

We expect regular COVID-19 testing

We *expect* all attendees to test for COVID-19 immediately before attending the event, and we *encourage* you to test daily during the event, during travel days to or from Petaluma, and on the 5th day following the conclusion of the event.

We *encourage* you to inform close contacts, should you test positive during or after the event, so that they can take appropriate precautions.

We *commit* to offering rapid tests for those with financial need, including financial aid recipients, and will provide a list of nearby stores that sell rapid tests.

As a low-budget conference, we cannot presently *commit* to verifying negative test results or contraindications in an equitable manner, however, we *expect* you to act in accordance with the remainder of this policy should you test positive.

COVID-19 Vaccines

We *encourage* all non-exempt participants to be up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccines, as it is the best way to reduce the impact of COVID-19 should you be infected during your time traveling to and attending the conference.

In particular, we *encourage* you to investigate the bivalent booster that became available in the United States in September 2022.

As a low-budget conference, we are unable to verify vaccination status, especially for those who are exempt from vaccination for medical reasons.

We will refund you if you are unwell

We *require* you to not attend the conference if your presence would create a risk of exposure to communicable diseases (such as COVID-19) to your fellow attendees. Risk factors include:

- Experiencing known COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, in ways that are unusual to you
- Testing positive to COVID-19 during the conference, or before the conference without subsequently testing negative (for example, by 2 non-positive rapid tests taken 48 hours apart, or a negative PCR test)
- Experiencing extended close contact with someone who has tested positive to COVID-19, influenza, or other communicable respiratory infections
- Any significant risk factor identified by the State of California or United States Public Health authorities

We *encourage* you to let the conference organizers know that you are unwell. Should you do so, we *commit* to offer a refund, prorated to the number of full days that you were unable to attend due to illness.

We are not able to offer remote participation options this year, due to bandwidth constraints at our venue.

We are capacity-constrained this year, so letting us know in advance may help us be able to make your seat available to someone who has missed out on a ticket.

Respect your fellow attendees' privacy

Some attendees may have non-contagious chronic or acute conditions with symptoms that resemble those of COVID-19, colds, or the flu. In particular, allergy symptoms can resemble COVID symptoms, and are highly likely for those with grass allergies attending our venue.

We *expect* you to respect your fellow attendees' privacy. In turn, we ask all attendees that you take appropriate precautions during the event so that you can be confident that you are protecting your fellow attendees.

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